

Remarks

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication that claims 24-27 are allowable and that claims 2-4, 14-16, and 23 define allowable subject matter. Additionally, in the outstanding Final Office Action, the Examiner rejects claims 1, 5-13, and 17-22 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,876,663 to Johnson et al. ("Johnson") in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0026267 to Oberman et al. ("Oberman").

By this Amendment, Applicants propose amending claims 1, 8, and 18 to substantially include the features previously recited in claims 2, 14, and 23, respectively. Further, Applicants propose amending dependent claims 3, 4, 5, 15-17, and 21 to improve form. Claims 2, 14, and 23 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1, 3-13, 15-22, and 24-27 would be pending upon entry of these proposed amendments.

For the reasons pointed out in the previously filed Request for Reconsideration, Applicants do not agree with the Examiner's rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Johnson and Oberman. However, in order to expedite prosecution, Applicants have proposed amending the claims so that all the proposed pending claims include features indicated by the Examiner as being allowable over the prior art of record. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the rejections based on Johnson and Oberman under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) are obviated.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner's reconsideration of this application, and the timely

allowance of the pending claims. Since the amendments proposed herein put the application in condition for allowance, the amendments should be entered by the Examiner.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-1070 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

HARRITY SNYDER, L.L.P.

By: /Brian E. Ledell/
Brian E. Ledell
Reg. No. 42,784

11350 Random Hills Road
Suite 600
Fairfax, Virginia 22030
(571) 432-0800
Customer Number: 44987

Date: May 30, 2006